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SUBJECT: DPKO BRIEFING ON DRC, JUNE 4

(U) Classified by William J. Brencick, USUN Political  
Minister-Counselor, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. Confidential - entire text.

12. (C) Summary: DPKO USG Guehenno briefed the P3 plus 2 concerning the situation in the DRC. He was particularly concerned by the lack of progress towards a stable solution to the political difficulties of the Kivus (especially the role of Rwanda and the need for dialogue between Kinshasa and Kigali). The political situation in Kinshasa was troublesome. There was currently no counterweight to the power of the presidency, human rights problems needed to be addressed, and the role of Bemba was not resolved. Security Sector Reform was not progressing adequately and needed the support of the international community. He particularly advocated the establishment of a framework (even if informal) for international engagement with the GDRC. End Summary.

13. (C) The Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno, briefed the P3 plus 2 (US, France, and the UK plus Belgium and South Africa) on MONUC and the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on June 4th. This briefing was in part a preparation for the UNSC trip to Africa, one part of which is a stop in Kinshasa. USUN was represented by the POL Minister-Counselor and the Senior Adviser for Africa.

The Situation in the Kivus

14. (C) Guehenno said that the situation in the Kivus remained serious. The DRC was aware of the gravity, but there seemed to be no clear plan to arrive at a solution with any promise of stability. It was not sufficient to change the military leadership in the east, while ignoring the need to engage all the communities, especially the Banyamulenge, in a substantive dialogue. The GDRC needed the assistance of the international community to move further towards a solid plan.

There was also a need for the economic development of the region, and the international community should target aid projects with that in view.

15. (C) DPKO had received what it believed were credible reports of Rwandans being recruited by Nkunda to strengthen his mixed brigade. The UN had facilitated the return to Rwanda of up to 100 disaffected Rwandans who had been recruited by Nkunda. President Kabila needed to be discouraged from furthering the mixage of Nkunda's troops and support brassage, or full integration.

¶16. (C) Guehenno believed that an agreed way forward between Rwanda and the DRC needed to be established. Perhaps the Tripartite Meeting in Lubumbashi would provide the venue for the discussions of a political solution to the problem of the FDLR (involving inevitably the settlement of some elements in the DRC). The UN believed that the GDRC had sent a letter to Kigali asking to engage on the FDLR and Nkunda questions.

#### Political Situation in Kinshasa

¶17. (C) At present there was no real counterweight to the power of President Kabila. The Parliament was weak. The provinces, which might provide a counterweight, were without sufficient structure. The international community needed to send a message to Kabila on the importance of checks and balances. Just what these should be was perhaps not clear enough, but the international community should support, he believed, the newly created provincial institutions.

¶18. (C) The human rights situation remained troubling. The harassment of opposition members continued. And there were conflicting signals concerning the DRC commitment to good governance. The authorities needed to know that the international community was watching and concerned. It might be helpful if it were made clear to Kabila the issues that he should be prepared to discuss during the UNSC visit, including freedom of the press and radio (which was particularly important in the DRC).

¶19. (C) Nor was Bemba a symbol of good governance and democracy, but ignoring him was not a good option. He was trying to get in touch with Kabila. His parliamentary immunity remained, and Guehenno understood that both the President and Vice President of the Senate were opposed to lifting his immunity.

The Belgian Ambassador said that there was talk in Kinshasa of a government reorganization. Perhaps Bemba might come back as a leader of the opposition, and be treated as such, but not treated as a force in himself. The French representative said that the less space the government accorded the opposition, the stronger they made Bemba. A "radicalization" in the treatment of Bemba (e.g., trying him in absentia) would only strengthen him.

#### Security Sector Reform

¶10. (C) Reform of the police was (relatively speaking) making progress. Focus was therefore needed on the FARDC. MONUC could not address this task alone; bilateral programs were needed. The GDRC had promised an over-all strategic approach, but none had been presented. But even without such a plan, one could perhaps work battalion by battalion. One could also work on the Command and Control structure (e.g., training of the professional officer corps, support for the establishment of a serious administrative framework that would see to soldiers' pay, etc.)

#### A Framework for Engagement with the Congolese Authorities

¶11. (C) The GDRC had resisted a formal framework, but the equivalent was needed. One needed to be pragmatic. Perhaps Ambassadors should meet periodically and then engage the government? The UK representative suggested that the UNSC visit might provide the occasion to press Kabila to establish a contact mechanism.

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